

**Ryan White Planning Council of the Philadelphia Part A EMA  
Positive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 12, 2014  
12:00-2:00p.m.**

Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

**Present:** PH: (17), PA: (8), NJ: (1)

**Staff:** Nicole Johns, Stephen Handlon

**Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Introductions:** M. Dorsey called the meeting to order at 12:11p.m. He then read the mission statement.<sup>1</sup> A moment of silence followed. Those present then introduced themselves.

**Approval of Agenda:** M. Dorsey presented the agenda for approval. **Motion:** M. White moved, L. Way seconded to approve the agenda. **Motion passed:** All in favor.

**Approval of Minutes** (*April 14, 2014*): M. Dorsey presented the minutes for approval. **Motion:** M. White moved, L. Way seconded to approve the April 14, 2014 minutes. **Motion passed:** All in favor.

**Report of Chair:** D. Gana acknowledged first time Positive Committee guests with tokens of appreciation. He then thanked the Positive Committee and OHP staff.

**Report of Staff:**

N. Johns stated that the community education event scheduled for June had been postponed. She noted that it was important for Positive Committee members to RSVP before the meetings. N. Johns then relayed that J. Malloy suggested having an informal gathering to share stories and memories of M. Price. N. Johns noted that M. Price passed away in February and was very involved in the community.

N. Johns stated that the regional Ryan White grant award letter was released and the EMA had received a funding increase. She noted that the Planning Council completed allocations and did not make large changes to the plans. N. Johns stated that New Jersey had placed additional dollars into case management. A community member asked for an explanation of Ryan White. N. Johns replied that Ryan White was a federally funded HIV services program that covered a wide range of services, including transportation, medication assistance, case management, dental care, food banks, legal services, housing counseling, short term emergency housing and mental health treatment. She explained that the Philadelphia EMA received money from the federal government because of the large number of PLWHA in the region. She noted that every state received money for Ryan White services in some form. N. Johns stated that Ryan White services differed from place to place. D. Gana stated that case managers could provide clients with a Ryan White services card. He noted that Ryan White was the “payer of last resort.” D. Gana stated that HIV-positive individuals would need to ask

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<sup>1</sup> The Positive Committee supports and enhances the role of people living with HIV/AIDS to empower their participation in the decision-making process of the Ryan White Part A Planning Council and the HIV Prevention Planning Group.

their case manager about Ryan White certification. D. Gana then stated that the health information number<sup>2</sup> was available on the Ryan White cards. N. Johns noted that the OHP had cards with the health information hotline number.

**Action Items:**

- **Brainstorm Ryan White Brochure**

N. Johns stated that the Ryan White services card was set to be launched during AIDS Education month in response to an OHP consumer survey. She stated that many survey respondents believed they “could not afford” or “did not know where to go” to receive Ryan White services, indicating an information gap.

N. Johns stated that the OHP also wanted to create a short pamphlet featuring frequently asked questions about Ryan White. She stated that the OHP wanted feedback from Positive Committee members. N. Johns noted that the pamphlets would be useful for both newly-diagnosed individuals and previously-diagnosed individuals. N. Johns stated that many community members were unaware that dental care was provided through organizations funded by Ryan White and the health centers.

N. Johns suggested the Positive Committee brainstorm a Ryan White pamphlet. M. Coleman suggested including resources for free care. D. Gana replied that Ryan White was the “payer of last resort” and therefore, the Positive Committee had to be careful when using the word “free.” N. Johns suggested stating “your inability to pay for something is not a barrier to receiving services” and the Positive Committee replied that they liked this phrasing. T. Carter asked what an FQHC was and N. Johns replied that an FQHC was a Federally Qualified Health Center. She explained that FQHCs were paid for by the government and provided free and low cost health care. A community member suggested including the address and phone number of organizations and N. Johns replied that the OHP did not want to create another HIV service directory. N. Johns suggested including the health information line number on the brochure and the Positive Committee concurred. She noted that listing the health centers in the pamphlet was feasible. N. Johns replied that information about the AIDS Library<sup>3</sup> could be listed on the brochure as well. C. Brown suggested including information on the Ryan White story and the Positive Committee concurred. M. White suggested listing the different subcommittees on the brochure and N. Johns replied that the brochure would only list services. A community member stated that housing was a large unmet need in the EMA. W. Walters stated that mental health was also important. D. Gana stated that many community members could not afford co-pays and Ryan White could pick up the difference. K. C. stated that in regards to transportation, consumers had difficulty understanding the difference between tokens and logistics care. A community member stated that there was a communications issue surrounding logistics care because sometimes community members became ineligible for tokens if they received the service. J. Wiggins stated that logistics care did not provide transportation to case management. K. C. stated that every organization stressed the two token per day limit. N. Johns stated that other programs might adhere to different policies. M. Coleman stated that each office had different policy for Ryan White and N. Johns stated that there were legal rules governing Ryan White and offices that received Ryan White funding could not have cash on hand. N. Johns stated that the scope of

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<sup>2</sup> Health Information Hotline Number: 1-800-985-2437

<sup>3</sup> The AIDS Library at Philadelphia FIGHT serves the community through delivery of information on HIV, such as treatments, nutrition, and history of the pandemic, and referrals to regional and national resources.

what Ryan White could pay for narrowed significantly. N. Johns stated that the scope of what Ryan White could pay for in regards to transportation had narrowed to ensure that all community members had access to the service. N. Johns stated that this was an important issue the Planning Council could discuss further.

W. Walters suggested encouraging community members to call the health information line. J. Wiggins suggested including information on medication acquisition and adherence. M. White suggested that substance abuse was another topic that could be covered by the brochure. K. C. stated that the Ryan White services guide was an important resource for community members. M. White stated that legal services were another important topic. N. Johns stated that Ryan White legal services addressed discrimination but did not provide legal defense. She stated that the AIDS Law Project<sup>4</sup> had a broad scope but Ryan White funding could only provide for specific legal services. D. Gana stated that the Ryan White card could be used anywhere in the EMA. N. Johns then stated that she would do a write-up and bring the document to the next meeting. N. Johns asked about the visual that should be included on the brochure. A community member asked if there was a symbol that represented Ryan White and N. Johns replied no. W. Walters stated that the OHP should not use a red ribbon or anything that identified the brochure as being strictly about HIV/AIDS. D. Morrison suggested using a tree as a visual. C. Brown suggested using a rainbow as a visual.

- **Mr. Friendly Activity** – *David Gana, Co-Chair*

D. Gana stated that Mr. Friendly<sup>5</sup> was the face of HIV/AIDS awareness. He stated that the program was meant to promote discussion of HIV/AIDS among both HIV-negative and HIV-positive community members. D. Gana stated that on June 16, 2014, the OHP would have a booth for AIDS Education Month and encouraged Positive Committee members to assist with volunteer work. He stated that the point of the Mr. Friendly initiative was to start dialogue. D. Gana stated that speaking about Mr. Friendly would empower community members and community members did not need to be HIV-positive to promote Mr. Friendly. He stated that the Positive Committee could directly address HIV/AIDS stigma. He stated that discussing HIV/AIDS in a friendly manner was an important aspect of this. D. Gana stated that he wanted community members to be active communicators and feel that they had support. He stated that Mr. Friendly tags would be sold at the HIV Prevention Summit. D. Gana stated that many HIV-positive individuals felt that if they disclosed their status, they would be rejected. He stated that he was always very open about his status and usually received positive results. D. Gana stated that if a community member revealed they got tested but had unprotected sex, the respondent should focus on the fact that testing had occurred. He stated that antagonism led to increased stigma. D. Gana stated that he had talked to his own faith community about being HIV-positive. M. Dorsey stated that during AIDS Watch, he had an opportunity to meet Mr. Brooks, the Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy. He stated that telling personal stories was a way to break down the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. D. Gana stated that many community members did not want to have sex with an HIV-positive individual. D. Morrison stated that HIV/AIDS was a medical condition and should be treated as such but the discussion was making him more self-aware. D. Gana stated that allowing open conversation around HIV/AIDS and sexuality in general was very

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<sup>4</sup> AIDS Law Project is a non-profit, public interest law firm providing free legal assistance to people living with HIV/AIDS and those affected by the epidemic.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Friendly is an international, yet grassroots movement to reduce stigma of HIV, encourage testing for HIV, and improve quality of life for those living with HIV.

important. K. C. stated that consent forms were required for HIV testing and not testing for other STIs, which could lead to stigma. K. C stated that she met an emergency room nurse whose hospital automatically tested for HIV. C. Brown stated that sex was not discussed openly in the United States even though it was very much a part of the media. D. Gana stated that to volunteer, Positive Committee members should maintain a friendly attitude. Positive Committee members then participated in a Mr. Friendly activity that addressed HIV/AIDS stigma.

A community member felt that despite the stigma of HIV/AIDS, she felt that her diagnosis motivated her to become a better mother. She stated that HIV was a chronic disease but did not have to define an individual.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** M. White stated that ACT UP would meet a 5:00p.m. at Drexel University to speak with the Pennsylvania gubernatorial candidates about issues pertaining to PLWHA.

**Announcements:** None.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by general consensus at 2:12p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Stephen Handlon, Staff

Handouts distributed at the meeting:

- May 12, 2014 Meeting Agenda
- April 14, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- OHP Calendar

**Monday, May 12, 2014**

**12:00-2:00pm**

Office of HIV Planning 340 N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 203  
Philadelphia, PA

**Mission Statement- The Positive Committee supports and enhances the role of people living with HIV/AIDS to empower their participation in the decision-making process of the Ryan White Part A Planning Council and the HIV Prevention Planning Group.**

- **Call to Order/Moment of Silence**  
**Introductions**
- **Approval of Agenda**
- **Approval of Minutes**
- **Report of Chair**
  - **Participation**  
**Acknowledgements**
- **Report of Staff**
- **Action Items:**
  - **Brainstorm Ryan White Brochure**
  - **Mr. Friendly Activity – David Gana, Co-Chair**
- **Old Business**
- **New Business**
- **Announcements**
- **Adjournment**

**AGENDA**

**POSITIVE COMMITTEE**

**PLEASE TURN ALL CELL PHONES AND PAGERS TO SILENT OR VIBRATE.**

*The next meeting of the Positive Committee is  
June 9, 2014 from 12:00-2:00PM at 340 N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 203,  
Philadelphia, PA 19107. Please refer to the Office of HIV Planning calendar  
of events for committee meetings & updates ([www.hivphilly.org](http://www.hivphilly.org)). If you  
require any special assistance, please contact the office at least 5 days in  
advance.*

**Ryan White Planning Council (RWPC) of the Philadelphia Part A EMA  
Positive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 14, 2014  
12:00-2:00p.m.**

Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

**Present:** PH (21), PA (1), NJ (2)

**Staff:** Nicole Johns, Stephen Handlon

**Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Introductions:** W. Walters called the meeting to order at 12:07p.m. She then read the mission statement.<sup>1</sup> A moment of silence followed. Those present then introduced themselves.

**Approval of Agenda:** W. Walters presented the agenda for approval. **Motion:** J. Wiggins moved, R. Brown seconded to approve the minutes. **Motion passed:** All in favor.

**Minutes (March 10, 2014):** W. Walters presented the minutes for approval. **Motion:** J. Wiggins moved, R. Brown seconded to approve the March 10, 2014 minutes. **Motion passed:** All in favor.

**Report of Staff:** N. Johns read a note from co-chair D. Gana. In the note, D. Gana thanked the Positive Committee for their input on the Ryan White Services card. He stated that the planning council approved the card and informed the grantee of problems with the current system. N. Johns then stated that AACO would distribute the Ryan White services card but asked the OHP to reformat the card without changing the information. She then stated that there would be a Ryan White community workshop in late June, 2014.

**Old Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

None.

**Announcements:**

M. Coleman stated that PHMC (Public Health Management Corporation) was having an event called "The Resource Event" on Wednesday, April 16, 2014 from 10-2p.m. He stated that breakfast and resume assistance would be provided. M. Coleman stated that the event would be at the PHMC Care Clinic.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The PHMC Care Clinic is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Philadelphia.

N. Johns stated that the Positive Committee meeting would be very casual due to the absence of the co-chairs. She asked if the Positive Committee would like to view “The Ryan White Story”<sup>3</sup>, “Paris is Burning”<sup>4</sup> or “We Were Here.”<sup>5</sup> The Positive Committee voted in favor of watching “The Ryan White Story.”

N. Johns stated that Dr. Gardner would speak on April 17, 2014 at 12:00p.m. at the University of Pennsylvania. She stated that the presentation would be recorded but would not be streamed live. N. Johns suggested the Positive Committee watch the video at a later meeting.

L. Grimes stated that on the April 23, Philadelphia Fight<sup>6</sup> would preview AIDS Education Month.<sup>7</sup>

J. Wiggins stated that on April 29, 2014, Philadelphia Fight would host a trip to Washington, D.C. to protest HIV criminalization. M. Coleman stated that on April, 17 2014 the Philadelphia Ethnical Society would host a forum on HIV criminalization.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by general consensus at 12:40p.m.

**Film Viewing:**

- The Ryan White Story

Respectfully submitted by,

Stephen Handlon, Staff

Handouts distributed at the meeting:

- Meeting Agenda
- March 10, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- OHP Calendar

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<sup>3</sup> The Ryan White Story is a 1989 television film about Ryan White.

<sup>4</sup> Paris is Burning is a 1990 American documentary film that chronicled the ball culture of New York City and the African-American, Latino, gay and transgender communities involved in it.

<sup>5</sup> We Were Here is a 2011 documentary about the AIDS crisis in San Francisco.

<sup>6</sup> Philadelphia Fight is an AIDS service organization in Philadelphia.

<sup>7</sup> Since 1993, Philadelphia FIGHT has hosted AIDS Education Month, a series of events throughout Philadelphia to increase awareness of AIDS.